



PRESS RELEASE

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MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS DAY 1994
5 DECEMBER 1994

Across the world, volunteers come from every segment of the population. They represent a vast diversity of age, race, nationality and culture, and a wide variety of life experience.

Yet all volunteers share a common characteristic: a fundamental respect for humanity and an active commitment to human betterment.

This is the foundation upon which the United Nations was built nearly fifty years ago. And in that time, volunteers have played a major role in helping the United Nations maintain peace and security, promote social and economic progress, and achieve human betterment for all peoples.

Through the United Nations Volunteers Programme, thousands of people have made significant contributions. Since the programme was created by the General Assembly in 1970, over 12,000 volunteers have served in community-led development programmes, humanitarian relief efforts and peace-building activities, as well as in initiatives to protect the environment, empower women and promote human rights.

The United Nations Volunteers are just one part of a worldwide corps of volunteers who are working every day to improve people's lives.

On this International Volunteers Day, as we commend volunteers for their efforts, let us also learn from their human focus. Let us be inspired by their active commitment. Let us recognize that volunteers -- and the ideals they represent -- will be increasingly important in a world where peace, justice and prosperity require ever-widening cooperative effort.
